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January 7, 2016

Tom Reilly – Montana State Parks, Assistant Administrator
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Headquarters
1420 East 6th Avenue
Helena, MT 59620
(Delivered Via Email: treilly@mt.gov)

**RE: Montana State Parks - Facility Condition Inventory (A/E #2015-35-01)
Summary of Findings**

Mr. Reilly:

Over the course of the past 14 months, our team of professionals has completed infrastructure assessments & prepared evaluations of the following 34 of Montana's 55 State Parks:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| • Ackley Lake | • Giant Springs | • Placid Lake |
| • Anaconda Stack | • Granite | • Rosebud Battlefield
(Kobold House) |
| • Bannack | • Hell Creek | • Salmon Lake |
| • Beavertail Hill | • Lake Elmo | • Smith River |
| • Big Arm | • Les Mason | • Spring Meadow Lake |
| • Black Sandy | • Lewis & Clark Caverns | • Thompson Falls |
| • Chief Plenty Coups | • Logan | • Tongue River Reservoir |
| • Cooney | • Lone Pine | • Traveler's Rest |
| • First Peoples Buffalo
Jump | • Lost Creek | • Wayfarers |
| • Fish Creek | • Makoshika | • West Shore |
| • Frenchtown Pond | • Missouri Headwaters | • Whitefish Lake |
| | • Pictograph Cave | |

This work was performed in fulfillment of the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks' Facility Condition Inventory (FCI). The primary objective of the FCI was to present State Parks with an independent and objective look at the overall health of existing facilities & systems and to document observed needs both large and small. The FCI Team reviewed a variety of infrastructure ranging from trails to lighting efficiency to historic preservation.

In summary, this study identified more than \$22.1 Millionⁱ in infrastructure projects that are recommended within the next 10 years. This capital investment is the minimum needed in order to continue providing the current level of service to patrons of Montana's State Parks. General maintenance operations & costs to correct minor deficiencies are not included.

ⁱ The present worth estimate of 22.1 Million is reported in 2015 US Dollars. Assuming a conservative 3% annual construction inflation rate, these costs are projected to increase to roughly **\$25.6 Million by 2020**. Where applicable, construction and project costing exercises included estimates of design costs, management activities, contractor profit and overhead, bonding, and construction contingency.



The proposed Capital Improvements (as listed in the Final FCI Reports) were selected based upon demonstrated need, observed deficiencies/failures, urgency, public safety, and professional experience. In addition, project rankings were structured to align as closely as possible with Montana State Parks' mission to promote stewardship and to maintain the long-term viability of Montana's natural, cultural, and recreational resources.

Great West recommends that top-priority be given to those projects identified to have potential impacts on public health and safety. Our team observed numerous instances where staff and visitor safety may be at risk due to existing infrastructure conditions. Examples of emergency replacements and/or critical safety upgrades include, but are not limited to:

- Replacement of the Flood-Damaged Diane Gabriel Trail Bridge – Makoshika
- Upgrades to Unsafe Sewage Lift Stations – Wayfarers
- Repair of Dangerous Electrical Components:
 - Bannack, Lewis & Clark Caverns, and Whitefish Lake
- Analysis of the Over-Capacity Fish Cleaning Station and Septic System – Hell Creek
- Upgrades to Non-Compliant Aircraft Hazard Lighting – Anaconda Stack
- Construction of a Safety Fence around the Crumbling Miner's Union Hall – Granite
- Elimination of Unsafe Confined Spaces in the Water Chlorination Vault – Lone Pine
- Correction of Structural Deficiencies in Staff Housing – Traveler's Rest

A few of the high-priority capital project recommendations include the following:

- Replacement of Aged, Failing, and/or Over-Capacity Septic Systems:
 - Lewis & Clark Caverns, Traveler's Rest, and Salmon Lake
- Replacement or Rehabilitation of Dilapidated Comfort Stations/Bathrooms:
 - Big Arm, Lewis & Clark Caverns, and Cooney
- Installation of Regulatory-Compliant Gasoline/Diesel Storage Tanks:
 - Tongue River Reservoir, Lewis & Clark Caverns, and Makoshika
- Replacement of an Unlined Water Tank & Water Supply Upgrades – Hell Creek
- Viewing Bridge and Retaining Wall Rehabilitations – Giant Springs
- Historic Preservation & Building Rehabilitation Work – Bannack
- Replacements of Failing Boat Docks – Big Arm
- Armoring Installation to Reduce Box Culvert Scour – Makoshika
- Roof Replacements – Numerous Parks & Buildings
- Vault Toilet Replacements – Numerous Parks
- Fire Alarm System Replacement & Emergency Generator Repairs – Bannack

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination and guarantees equal opportunities for persons with disabilities with regard to State-provided services and/or public accommodations. While accessibility deficiencies do not create safety/health risks or cause facility deterioration, they can (and do) limit access to persons with disabilities. The FCI Team observed non-compliant and dated ADA infrastructure at EVERY Park visited. Where technically feasible, Parks Leadership should work to improve access for all visitors of Montana's State Parks.



In general, we observed that Parks Maintenance Personnel have worked diligently to stretch their funds, manpower, and resources as far as possible. However, many of the sites are remote with limited access to replacement parts, specialty tools, equipment, and/or skilled labor. As a result, maintenance activities and facility repairs, implemented as stopgaps, inevitably become long-term solutions. In many cases, compounding maintenance issues (when coupled with facility age) have rendered rehabilitation or repair of the existing facilities infeasible. Conditions will only worsen as time goes on. As such, replacement of an old or degraded infrastructure item may represent the only technically viable option for continued service/operation.

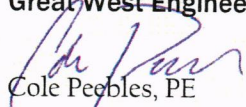
Based on the FCI-identified project backlog, and the Department's reported 2015 biennial general fund (roughly \$696,000ⁱⁱ) for capital improvements work, Montana State Parks is significantly underfunded, and therefore ill-equipped to handle the challenge of properly caring for these important facilities. While the preparation of this FCI represents an important first—and proactive—step in the process to correct these and other deficiencies on a statewide scale, it is by no means all-inclusive. The findings of this Facility Condition Inventory should be utilized as a tool to:

- Improve maintenance efficiency;
- Prepare a comprehensive & software-integrated asset management strategy;
- Limit further infrastructure deterioration;
- Provide continuing education and training to maintenance personnel;
- Seek out and secure additional funding sources; and
- Begin planning and budgeting for capital projects that are necessary to repair, upgrade, or replace these and other facility deficiencies.

Great West Engineering, Mosaic Architecture, and CTA have appreciated this opportunity to provide our professional services, and would welcome the chance to assist the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks in preserving Montana's heritage and improving our State Parks moving forward. Please don't hesitate to contact me with questions regarding this process, our evaluations, and/or the proposed projects included as part of this Facility Condition Inventory. I can be reached by phone at (406) 495-6172 or at cpeebles@greatwesteng.com.

Sincerely,

Great West Engineering, Inc.


Cole Peebles, PE
Project Manager

Email cc: Paul Valle – Design & Construction Supervisor, Gretchen Krumm – Mosaic Architecture

ⁱⁱ The Parks Biennial Budget of \$696,000 does not include Highway Fuels Monies, Federal Motorboat Funds, or Boat-in-Lieu Funds. These additional available pools have caveats, match requirements, and other restrictions, which may make funding many of the listed improvements difficult, if not infeasible.